FEDERAL CITY PERFORMING ARTS ASSOCIATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
April 18, 1995
Levine School of Music

Directors: Present: Boykin, Cohen, de Keyser, Fiorito, Gerard, Greenwald, Madigan, Rosen, Wheeler
Absent: Haber (proxy assigned)
Streit, Weeks (no proxy assigned)
Guests: Rick Rosendall, Dick Dorr, Holloway, McClelland

Meeting called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Fiorito.

REVIEW OF March 15, 1995 MINUTES

Rosen asked that page 1, 3rd correction under **REVIEW OF MINUTES** be changed to read "Jill Strachan from the Lesbian and Gay...."

He also asked that page 4, first sentence under **BYLAWS COMMITTEE** be amended to "Rosen asked that Appendix..."

Cohen asked that page 4, first paragraph, last sentence under **MARKETING COMMITTEE** be changed to read "He will ask for budget approval...."

Motion to approve the minutes as amended:Greenwald. Second:Rosen. Unanimously approved.

FINANCIAL REPORT

McClelland handed out the monthly reports for the chorus. Our March statement says that we are running a deficit of $24,135.14. We sold fewer tickets to the March concert than anticipated, and we are under budget for many of our revenue sources. At the same time, our expenses have remained on budget, making our losses even greater than anticipated.

Concert revenue is unfavorable by a total of $20,853.90. For next year's budget, McClelland is going to ask for a breakdown of the major costs of a concert to ensure that the money is spent wisely. He warned the board that next year will be very expensive to the chorus, especially due to the hiring of an Executive Director and expenses relating to GALA.

McClelland then stated that each board member should examine why the budget is so unfavorable. He said that this organization provides a unique product and that is what makes the chorus profitable. It is ultimately the board's responsibility to be the final reviewer and approver of this product. Next year will be quite expensive for the chorus, and the board must ensure that we will be bringing in revenue by selling our unique product.

Gerard said that the board should use this season as a learning experience for the future. Rosendall thought that the Lincoln Theatre venue was an excellent choice for the concerts and did not necessarily contribute to the lack of attendance. McClelland stated that the two Christmas concerts of 1988 and 1989 were the largest money makers for the chorus, and they were held in a church venue. Rosendall commented that we have taken a risk to perform two concerts this year which has

"stretched" the chorus. He praised Cohen for his excellent efforts on the Marketing Committee to advertise the concert season.

McClelland stated that diversity can be a goal of the organization, but we shouldn't lose our audience as a result of this goal. Holloway said he was quite upset, and felt that musical programming was the being looked at as the cause for the current deficit. He stated that the Music Advisory Committee has spent many hours to choose the programming for the concerts. He also said that there are many other committees that should be looked at which contributed to this loss.

Fiorito said that the board's function is not to choose the programming for the concerts. We are to approve the concert season, ensuring that the programming meets the goals and objectives of the chorus in accordance to our mission. Each committee is responsible for their own portions of this process, also keeping in mind the mission of the organization.

Rosendall said that he thought programming was part of the problem of the loss of revenue. Holloway disagreed and said that programming has become a very easy target for the problem.

Greenwald said he thought the chorus should be informed of the deficit situation. He feels that it will help the chorus in becoming aware that we must all make more of an effort to sell tickets to this next concert.

Boykin said that the last two concerts have caused a strain on membership. He said that he takes responsibility as a board member for approval of a concert season that was not ideal, but that now every committee should be looking at what they can do to improve the last concert from their standpoint.

McClelland said that this should be a learning experience for all committees. He asked all committees to look at how they could improve for the next concert to attempt to rectify some of the problem. Rosendall stated that his committee has done everything he feels he could do. Cohen pointed out that the organization has limited resources available for marketing these new programming concepts.

Fiorito highly commended all committees for their efforts, especially Rosendall, Cohen and Holloway.

Motion was made by Boykin to accept the financial report. Seconded by Cohen. Unanimously approved.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Fiorito received a letter from the attorney of Harry Power's estate. The current contract that was put on the house has fallen through. The house is still multiply listed and is still being shown. Because of crime problems in the neighborhood and the current financial state of the District of Columbia, there has been very little activity on the selling of the home. The lockbox on the door has been stolen numerous times. We have contacted two real estate agents to give us their professional

opinions on the value of the home. The estate is losing about $35,000 a year by the house still being on the market.

Greenwald asked if the real estate agents we are asking to help actually know the Logan Circle area. Fiorito said that one agent contacted referred us to someone who did know Logan Circle well. Dorr asked if we should consider another real estate agent to sell the home. Rosen suggested using either Mowbray Associates on 14th Street, which is gay owned, or Private Properties. Holloway suggested that the executive real estate market could be a venue to sell the property.

Fiorito has appointed Jim Peterson to be in charge of the CD Distribution and Marketing Committee.

Arena Stage has asked that we exchange our mailing list with theirs for a single mailing. This would be a name-for-name exchange. We would be able to select our names by city or zip code. Cohen asked what was the nature of their mailing, and Fiorito responded that this would be for their season brochure.

Rosendall said that we could put a statement about the Arena Stage mailing in our own season brochure. He said that the board has voted in the past not to sell the mailing list, but never addressed this situation. Madigan recommended against the exchange, saying it is in effect bartering our organization's name. He said that some people will find out that we have done this and could be upset.

Dorr wondered if we could afford to do a mailing to 5,000 more people. This would cost an additional $1500 according to Cohen. Holloway commented that this could be an effective way to get our brochure out to a diverse audience.

Wheeler said we have explored other mailing lists to buy in the past. Greenwald pointed out that we gave NOVAM 2,500 season brochures and they mailed them to their own mailing list. He thought that the chorus could mail the Arena Stage brochure ourselves. Holloway agreed saying we could put a statement on our own season brochure that we would be mailing the Arena brochures ourselves.

Cohen was doubtful of the return that we would get from the mailing. Greenwald said that even if you get 1% return, that would be a success. Rosendall said we must look to expand our prospective audience.

Greenwald moved that the chorus do a name-for-name exchange of our mailing list to Arena Stage to be used as a one-time mailing for both organizations. Boykin seconded. Cohen reminded the board that there would be budget implications on Marketing if the motion carried. Five approved, four opposed, no abstentions. Motion carried.

Chorus America is holding a choral conference from May 31 to June 3 in Seattle. Holloway and Wheeler have expressed an interest in going to the conference. The airfare for the trip would be $450 and $180 each for the registration for a total of $1,260 for both persons to go. Fiorito recommends that the board authorize this amount for the trip. Boykin said he was uncomfortable with this due to the recent negative financial news. Rosendall said that the conference could be useful to the chorus.

Greenwald said they may get ideas which will be helpful to the organization. Holloway thought it was an excellent conference and he thought it could be quite useful.

de Keyser said that if we had an Executive Director, that it would be a perfect conference to attend. Wheeler said that the new Executive Director will have a travel budget to attend such conferences.

Greenwald moved that Holloway and Wheeler be reimbursed $630 each for attendance at the Chorus America conference scheduled May 31st-June 3rd in Seattle. Cohen seconded. Six approved, one opposed, two abstained. Motion carried.

Fiorito then read each objective that should have been met and asked the committee responsible to respond as to its completion. He thanked everyone for their efforts to meet these objectives.

This month's words of wisdom: "Be proactive."

MUSIC DIVISION

Holloway stated that there is a Steering Committee for the June concert and they are preparing to meet. Rochester Women's Chorus has decided only to perform in the joint piece at the end of the concert, instead of performing their own set. Rosen and Holloway may be going to Philadelphia to meet with Anna Cruses.

Holloway then said that the Rehoboth concert will be on the lighter side. He will be asking Quintessential, a female small ensemble, to be on the program at Rehoboth.

The December concert has been revised due to budget concerns. The March concert will have a guest group or groups performing with the chorus.

Holloway has received telephone confirmation from Twin Cities and Columbus Gay Men's Choruses concerning the joint performance next July.

The small ensembles "Let Us Entertain You" concert is scheduled for February 1996. Jeff Buhrman has agreed to assist with this concert next year. Holloway also said that he is proposing a small concert to be performed next fall featuring the Chamber Choir.

Gerard asked if Holloway had considered the Capital Club commission work. Holloway said he will probably program the piece for the July concert. He has a local composer in mind for the commission, but said he will need half the money soon, which totals $2500.

Greenwald moved that the board advance the maximum of $2500 for the Capital Club commissioned work. Gerard seconded. Unanimously approved.

Madigan said that we have so many major concerts and smaller performances next year, that the Marketing Committee look into offering different package deals for particular sets of performances.

Wheeler stated that Lisner will be open on July 2,3 and 5 for the chorus to rehearse and perform.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Boykin stated that the Nominations and Elections Committee will consist of himself, Dan Patton and Ted Spencer.

He reported that at the recent membership meeting, a number of issues were discussed. Talking at rehearsals was becoming more disturbing to the membership. Those people who have problems standing long periods of time, due to age or disability, are having problems with the long dress rehearsals and performances. More of an effort needs to be made by music staff to include rest periods and times for the chorus to sit down, preferably every hour. Also, the last two dress rehearsals did not start or end on time and an effort should be made to keep to our schedule whenever possible.

The biggest concern that Boykin expressed was with the decline in membership of the chorus. He said that membership has decreased from 166 on Jan 1st to 131 in the March concert. Currently we have only 124 active members and that number is dropping considerably. Boykin said at this pace we will sing with only approximately 100 members in June and possibly only 80 in Rehoboth. He stated this was the worse attendance since Holloway became music director. He reiterated that we must all look at the reasons we have lost so many members.

Madigan suggested that all chorus buddies be contacted and that they speak to all of the newer chorus members. Boykin said that some sections have already send cards to persons on leave just to keep in touch with them. Rosendall said we must all try to be "troopers" for this musical period.

de Keyser said he has also noticed a decline in membership in the chorus, and that the current trend cannot be good for the chorus overall. He said it is important to be sensitive to the member's needs.

CORPORATE FUNDRAISING

de Keyser said that the Corporate Fundraising committee has gone through an educational period, and each member has attended a seminar in order to enhance their knowledge about corporate fundraising.

Most of the funding that we could apply for as an organization is not available, since we do not have an Executive Director. We have applied for two grants to assist in getting an Executive Director. Tom Gibb, Steve Rappaport and de Keyser assisted in the preparation of these grants.

An important strategy for getting funding is to find our own members who are working for large corporations and ask them for assistance in getting donations. We recently accomplished this with our AT&T donation that was made in the last concert. The drawback for us is that many people work for the Federal government, not private corporations.

Once we get a few large corporate donations, it will be much easier for us to secure other contributions by stating that we are already the recipient of similar funding.

MARKETING COMMITTEE

Cohen passed out options for the mailing of next year's season brochure. The committee suggests we mail out approximately 10,000 brochures--5,000 from our mailing list and 5,000 from the Arena Stage mailing. The other options were to mail out considerably fewer brochures.

Cohen moved that the chorus spend $6,500 in mailing out approximately 10,000 season brochures for the 1995-1996 season. Wheeler seconded. Unanimously approved.

Cohen then distributed a memo which suggested various proposals for discounts for season subscriptions. The committee recommends that we increase the discount to 15%.

The committee should be ready to include a flyer in the June concert about the season, and the formal brochure will be mailed out by Labor Day. Holloway suggested that the committee look at increasing the discount that subscribers would get by sending their money in earlier. For example, a 20% discount by one date, then 15% percent for a later date, and 10% for a later date. Fiorito said that a proposal of that nature would have to be discussed by the Marketing Committee first.
Dorr said that there is a cost of approximately $1000 for every 5% of discount.

Cohen then made a motion that the discount for season subscriptions be increased to 15%
Gerard seconded. After discussion about the amount of discount to be given, the motion and second were retracted.

A new motion was made by Cohen. He moved that the Board authorize the Marketing Committee to develop a season subscription campaign which has discounts of up to 20%, with the advice of the Finance committee and the Business Manager. Gerard seconded. Unanimously approved.

Cohen displayed the proposed artwork for the June concert. He is open to anyone's ideas of marketing for this concert. He will be giving away tickets to local women's groups for this concert.

BYLAW COMMITTEE

Dorr presented the revised bylaws which were discussed in the last board meeting. Rosendall said that the first bylaw change did not include a statement which said that active Capital Club membership was a requirement for board participation. Fiorito agreed, saying that the new bylaw should be clear about Capital Club membership. The committee will revise this and the board will vote on this bylaw change in the next two weeks.

Wheeler asked for a clarification of the leave of absence policy stated in the second bylaw change. Fiorito explained that a person could take a leave of absence from the chorus for one entire season before they were regarded as an inactive member.

Rosen moved that all the bylaw changes, except to the change to Article 4, be recommended to the membership. Madigan seconded. Unanimously approved.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Greenwald passed out a proposal for investment of the chorus' reserve fund. He said that he will table any discussion on this proposal to allow board members to read the proposal. The proposal is contingent on the selling of the Power's estate and the distribution of the proceeds, therefore the proposal can be postponed until later.

COMMUNITY LIAISON COMMITTEE

Madigan said his committee has addressed the complimentary ticket policy for the chorus, including the PWA policy. The committee is discussing the possibility of distributing a survey to the chorus membership concerning which other community groups that members are involved. The current committee is composed of Madigan, Rosendall, and Cohen.

He passed out articles from other organizations to make us aware of other arts organizations in the city and their different approaches.

OTHER BUSINESS

Rosendall proposed that we consider changing our organizationl name from Federal City Performing Arts Association to the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, Inc. He thought our organization should think about this.

Madigan moved that past presidents of the chorus be sent Hot Notes. Fiorito asked Madigan to reconsider motion, and Madigan agreed to withdraw it.

Fiorito asked that all budget proposals be given to McClelland by Sunday night.

There being no further business, Greenwald moved to adjourn, Rosen seconded. Unanimously approved. Meeting adjourned at 10:35pm.

Fred Boykin
Secretary
FCPAA Board of Directors